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## **MEMBERS OF MARYLAND & VIRGINIA DELEGATION COMMENT ON NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES REVIEW OF PENTAGON POLICIES ON BRAC-RELATED TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS**

*Study concludes Pentagon rules are unfair to urban and metro regions*

**WASHINGTON** -- Members of the Maryland and Virginia congressional delegation responded to today's release of an independent review identifying shortcomings in current Department of Defense policies on addressing and funding the transportation impact of military base realignments. The study, which was ordered through an amendment to the fiscal year 2010 defense budget and conducted by the National Academy of Sciences, concluded that the Pentagon's rules and policies for funding BRAC-related transportation improvements are inadequate to address congestion in urban and metropolitan areas, such as the National Capital Region.

The NAS concluded that base realignments required under the 2005 BRAC round may generate severe congestion impacts in some locations, and the BRAC completion schedule, in some instances, is too aggressive to allow for needed transportation improvements to be completed. In addition, the NAS concluded that the current standard -- that a BRAC-related project must cause a doubling of traffic on affected roads in order to qualify for transportation funding -- is "inappropriate" for already congested metro areas. The NAS also suggests that the Pentagon's BRAC-related transportation program should consider partial funding of mass transit and other congestion relief tools that could dramatically relieve traffic congestion around military facilities located in urban regions.

"Traffic congestion and overwhelmed mass transit threaten to jeopardize the effectiveness of the BRAC process that is bringing tens of thousands of new military and civilian jobs to our region," **said Senator Benjamin L. Cardin.** "The National Academy of Sciences report reaffirms what we, as a regional delegation, have been saying for years: The federal government must take greater responsibility for alleviating the looming traffic and transit woes for local

communities like Bethesda. The consequences of inaction would gridlock our national security, as well as affected urban and metropolitan areas.”

"BRAC can bring great opportunities, but it also brings challenges," **Senator Barbara A. Mikulski** said. "This report confirms what Marylanders who live in communities affected by BRAC already knew - that when the Department of Defense expands military bases in urban communities like Bethesda, it must take responsibility for those decisions by making a meaningful contribution to transit and road improvements. I applaud the National Academy this rigorous and independent study, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate and with the Department of Defense to act on the National Academy's recommendations."

"This independent analysis confirms the need for the Defense Department to more fully evaluate congestion issues and explore mass transit opportunities as it is responding to the expansion challenges at our military facilities," **Senator Mark R. Warner** said. "It was clear to the Virginia and Maryland delegations that there would be a significant and unsustainable congestion impact as a result of the BRAC-related expansions at Mark Center, Fort Belvoir, Bethesda and Fort Meade, and the National Academy has validated those concerns. Better coordination on these issues and stronger partnerships with the surrounding communities could go a long way in helping to maintain the quality of life of our residents, business owners and commuters, and we look forward to working with the Defense Department to determine how we can improve these outdated regulations."

"There is no question that, as a result of BRAC consolidation, many communities that have already experienced dramatic population growth are now facing even more challenges with increased traffic," **Senator Jim Webb** said. "This independent study confirms what we have been saying for some time: that many of the affected communities lack the funding and time to complete major projects before BRAC growth occurs, and that the Defense Department should do more to address communities' urgent transportation and infrastructure needs."

"Today's National Research Council report on federal funding for BRAC-related transportation improvements puts an exclamation point on what we've been saying for the better part of two years," said **Rep. Chris Van Hollen**. "The Department of Defense needs to accept more financial responsibility for addressing the problems it causes on transportation infrastructure serving our military bases. Current levels of funding will not be sufficient to address the impacts of BRAC-mandated consolidation at the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda. And, as a consequence, Congress must immediately enact a special appropriation to tackle this problem. I look forward to working with the Administration and my colleagues in the House and Senate to accomplish this objective without any further delay."

"The results of the National Academy of Sciences' study reiterate what many of us have said for years - the department's DAR criteria are simply unrealistic for developed urban and suburban areas," said **Rep. Jim Moran**. "The DoD has a responsibility to provide infrastructure improvements driven by BRAC relocations, and I encourage the department to immediately adopt the NAS recommendations."

“This NAS study provides third-party validation to the case that the region’s congressional delegation has been making for some time to the Department of Defense - that the transportation infrastructure around Fort Belvoir, the Mark Center, and other BRAC-related installations in the region is inadequate to handle the influx of thousands of new military and civilian personnel who will be transferred to these sites later this year,” **Rep. Gerry Connolly** said. “DoD should reevaluate its use of resources for transportation and transit improvements outside the perimeters of BRAC-related installations in Northern Virginia and across the metro area and the country. We want to be supportive of the Pentagon, but at the end of the day we need the resources to mitigate the impact.”

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